
Hawaii Territory pattern used even after statehood

On July 6, 1931, the government of the Territory of Hawaii processed the necessary paperwork to authorize the purchase and use of a Cummins perforating machine by the Bureau of the Budget.

The machine was ordered with dies to perforate the letters T. H., for Territory of Hawaii, in all adhesive stamps used in the various branches of the Territorial government. The purpose, of course, was to discourage the personal use of territorial postage supplies by employees.

The T. H. perfins continued in use until 1954 when Territorial Governor King rescinded the order covering the perforating machine to allow the use of postage meters. By that time, only three branches of the government were still using the perfins.



The T.H. pattern (T47) is quite common but still fascinating to collectors because it is one of only three perfins known to have originated in the 50th state, although others sometimes show up with Hawaii postmarks. The others are a branch of New York Life Insurance (N113AB-3) and Walter Field Company (W85A).

The late E. M. Pickop did a rather extensive study of the T.H. perfin in the early 1960s and determined that the pattern had been used on virtually all the U.S. regular and commemorative issues from 1931 through 1954, but on only a dozen or so issues after 1954, when the postage meter had become the preferred means of protecting postage supplies.

Curiously enough, Pickop did find the pattern in use as late as December 12, 1960—well after the Territory had become a state.
